

# Representative **Bill Hinkle** • 13th District

## ASSISTING THE PEOPLE I REPRESENT

This is the final newsletter I am allowed to send you in 2008 due to election-year restrictions. However, I am always allowed to respond to constituents who contact me.

If I can ever be of assistance, or if you just have a comment to share, please contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

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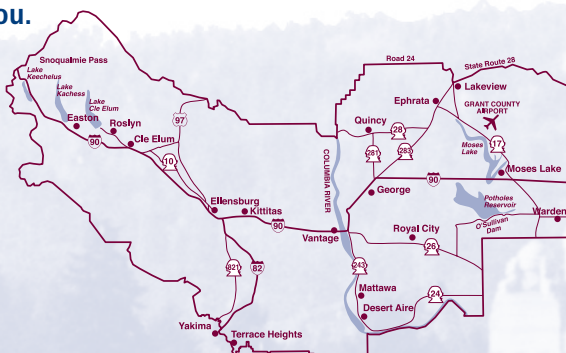
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## OTHER BILLS I SPONSORED THAT WERE SIGNED INTO LAW

**House Bill 1637** — updates the Uniform Anatomical Gift Act, making organ donation easier.

**House Bill 2881** — addresses future dentist shortage by streamlining the process for out-of-state dentists looking to gain certification in Washington.

**House Bill 2654** — expands the ability for community-based mental health services.



**2008 Legislative  
Session Review**

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**Rep. Bill Hinkle**  
P.O. Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600



# 2008 Legislative Session Review

**Bill Hinkle**

**13th District State Representative**

## Serving citizens in

- Kittitas County
- Yakima County
- Grant County

## District Office

2211 West Dolarway Road  
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## Committees

Health Care and Wellness  
(Ranking Republican)  
Appropriations  
Early Learning and  
Children's Services



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 2008 legislative session ended March 13, and I am happy to be back on the east side of the mountains with family and friends.

I am pleased that critical anti-gang and sex offender legislation was approved this year that will put families before felons. We also made important changes to our math curriculum and enhanced career and technical education in our public schools.

While some important legislation did pass, Olympia continued to "punt" on the major issues impacting families — including health care, transportation and property tax relief. I am also disappointed that during a supplemental budget year state spending increased by \$291 million. That is a 33 percent increase — \$8.7 billion — since 2004.

I appreciate you taking time to read my newsletter, and I encourage you to contact me to discuss issues important to you and your family. It is my honor to be your voice in the Washington State House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

Rep. Bill Hinkle

**Inside ...**

- Out-of-control state spending
- Helping hay and straw truckers
- Livestock protection bill dies in Senate
- Do you want to be taxed out of your vehicle? No!
- Still no meaningful health care reform

# Representative **Bill Hinkle** • 13th District

## Out-of-control state spending

During a supplemental year, in which state lawmakers are supposed to just make minor adjustments to the state operating budget, the majority party and governor increased spending by \$291 million. This represents a 33 percent increase – over \$8.7 billion – in state spending since 2004.

Nonpartisan Senate staff has projected a \$2.5 billion shortfall in the next budget cycle — and the problem could end up being worse.

While the impact of a national economic slowdown is starting to enter Washington, our state's economy remains strong. This means a healthy revenue growth rate, over 7 percent, for the state.

Our state does not have a revenue problem — it has a spending problem. Our state spending growth rate is over 16 percent.

If the state cannot control spending, it will not be able to control taxes. That is the bottom line. It is time to restore fiscal sanity in Olympia.



## Helping hay and straw truckers

Truck drivers who transport hay and straw now have a more streamlined process for weighing and getting their products to market.

I sponsored House Bill 2923 that will allow hay or straw processing facilities to provide weight tickets to truck drivers when they pick up their loads — provided the scale is approved by the Washington State Department of Agriculture. The measure was signed into law.

Truck drivers currently must load their vehicles with hay or straw and then drive to the closest certified weigh station. However, without knowing whether the vehicle is overweight, the State Patrol can pull the vehicle over and issue a citation. This common-sense bill will eliminate this problem and help truck drivers get their products to market faster.



## Livestock protection bill dies in Senate

I sponsored House Bill 1775, which would have authorized a nine-month jail term for anyone who intentionally killed or harmed horses or cattle without consent of the owner. It would have made this crime a Class C felony, and would have carried at least a \$2,000 fine for each animal killed.

The measure passed the House this year, but stalled in the Senate.

It is unconscionable that someone would kill a person's horse or cattle and not be held accountable. Raising livestock is a major part of the lifestyle and commercial activity in many of our communities. Killing cattle and horses can severely damage someone's quality of life.

I will introduce this legislation again next year.



## Do you want to be taxed out of your vehicle? No!

Senate Bill 6900 caused quite a stir this year, and my phone and e-mail inboxes were overwhelmed with concerned constituents who were opposed to the measure.

The legislation, sponsored by Seattle area Democrats, said the larger the car you drive and the bigger the engine is, the more your car tab fee would cost.

For a typical family that owns a small SUV or minivan, it would be looking at an additional annual fee of \$450. For farmers and ranchers, a typical truck would cost an additional \$325 per year. For families that have a few vehicles, the annual fees could have exceeded \$1,000.

This bill is an attempt to tax you out of your vehicle. I am pleased to report this ridiculous legislation died, but the sponsors have indicated they will reintroduce it next year.

I will continue to fight against legislation that will hurt the hard-working families of our district and dictate our way of life.

# 2008 Legislative Session Review

## Still no meaningful health care reform

Since 2000, the average family health insurance plan has nearly tripled in cost. Many families find themselves choosing between health insurance and paying the rent or mortgage.

Unfortunately, no meaningful health care legislation passed this year. The best the governor and majority party could do is commission its 16<sup>th</sup> health care study since 2005. Yes, the 16<sup>th</sup> study.

Instead of solving the problems and building on the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission, Olympia is retreating to more studies.

As ranking Republican on the House Health Care and Wellness Committee, I want to share with you my views on health care. They are in stark contrast to the current approach in Olympia and I am interested in what you think of them.

## GOVERNMENT, HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS AND PUBLIC MUST WORK TOGETHER

I believe government, health care providers and the public all have roles in our health care system. We must all work together if we are going to solve our problems. Here are some guiding principles for health care:

- Coverage for everyone.
- Coverage that you own, not the government.
- Coverage that fits your needs.
- Coverage that you do not lose if you change or lose a job.
- Coverage you can afford.



## HEALTH CARE SOLUTIONS

I introduced a bill that would have provided immediate assistance to the uninsured, small businesses and self-employed.

House Bill 3384 was a multi-pronged approach that would have offered affordable, flexible coverage. It would have provided a 50 percent business and occupation (B&O) tax credit for the self-employed, and reduced state mandates so the uninsured could get a health plan they could afford.

Unfortunately, the majority party rejected the legislation.



## 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY HEALTH CARE

Our current health care system is not designed for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We must embrace technology, innovation and the private sector. Here are some solutions:

- Increase access to quality health information so you can make the best decisions for you and your family.
- Make all medical expenses tax deductible.
- Allow consumers to shop across state lines for health insurance (portability).
- Assist small employers and self-employed with tax incentives on health insurance premiums (25 percent of uninsured adults).
- Increase access to Health Savings Accounts.
- Allow health policies that incentivize 19- to 34-year-olds (over 50 percent of the uninsured).
- Reduce health insurance costs by limiting state mandates on policies.
- Health care that you own — not the government.

## RESISTING THE MOVEMENT TO GOVERNMENT-RUN HEALTH CARE

We cannot continue to do the same thing and expect different results. "Business as usual" in Olympia is the problem, not the solution. Part of this mentality is a belief in government-run health care — an approach that will lead to more costs and fewer choices for consumers.

We must change from the mindset of "what is" to "what could be" for health care in our state. This is going to require leadership — something health care has not had in Olympia for a long time.